

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1-6 and 13-20 were withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention. Claims 7-11 were rejected.

Claim 2 has been amended to recite the features of claim 4. Claims 16 and 19 have been amended to depend from claim 2.

Claims 7 and 8 have been amended to address concerns raised in the Office Action. Claim 7 has been amended to recite the features of claim 9. New claim 21 has been added directed to a preferred embodiment.

Claims 4 and 9-11 have been canceled.

Method claims 2, 5, 13, 16 and 19 have been amended to reflect the features of apparatus claim 7. Therefore, rejoinder of at least claims 2, 5, 13, 16, 17, 19 and 20 is respectfully submitted to be proper upon a determination of allowability of the subject matter under examination.

No new matter has been introduced. Consideration and entry of the amendments are respectfully submitted to be proper.

Response to Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention, because independent claim 7 pointed out “a groove” or “a protrusion” or “both” in the alternate scope while dependent claims 8 and 9 positively recited “the groove and the protrusion.”

Applicant has amended the language of claim 7 to recite only “a groove.” Applicant has consistently amended claim 8. The rejection of claim 9 is obviated in view its cancellation. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are therefore respectfully submitted to be proper.

Response to Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 7, 8, and 10-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sugiura (U.S. Patent 5,779,361).

Applicant has amended independent claim 7 to recite the features of claim 9. Accordingly, Sugiura does not anticipate each and every element of the claims. “A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.” *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejection is respectfully submitted to be proper.

Response to Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sugiura (U.S. Patent 5,779,361) in view of Morikawa (U.S. Patent 5,887,977).

The rejection of claim 9 is obviated in view its cancellation. Applicant respectfully submits that remaining examined claims 7, 8 and 12, and new claim 21, are unobvious and patentable over the Sugiura and Morikawa references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully submitted to be proper.

Additionally, Applicant submits that method claims 2, 5, 13, 16, 17, 19 and 20 are

appropriate for rejoinder and allowance, as they have been amended to reflect the features of apparatus claim 7. Accordingly, rejoinder of the indicated method claims is submitted to be proper.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

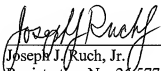
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